

CITY OF MUSKEGON
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES

January 7, 2003

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Chairperson, Bill Seeback.

MEMBERS PRESENT: B. Seeback, D. Chambers, W. Matsey, L. Spataro, T. Bosma, T. Russo

MEMBERS ABSENT: J. Hilt, excused.

STAFF PRESENT: B. Lazor, H.Griffith, B. Moore

OTHERS PRESENT: A. Bleakley and her Contractor, 318 Houston; Mr. Allen, Bauer House.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion that the regular meeting minutes of December 3, 2002 be approved was made by D. Chambers, supported by L. Spataro and unanimously approved.

T. Russo arrived at 4:03 p.m.

W. Matsey arrived at 4:04 p.m.

WALK-ON

A motion to table the request to hear Case 2003-02 until more information has been obtained was made by D. Chambers, supported by L. Spataro and unanimously approved.

NEW BUSINESS/PUBLIC HEARINGS

Case 2003-01: Applicant: Ann Bleakley; 318 Houston; District: Houston; Class: A. Applicant wishes to install new basement windows. B. Lazor presented the staff report. Applicant wishes to remove boards that have been covering up the basement windows of the Hovey House. She will install a total of ten, 2-lite vinyl sliding windows. The applicant states that from an old photo, a center mullion can be seen and these windows would closely match. Applicant wishes to improve the looks and functionality of this important house. Two lite windows are seen in the photos. Since vinyl windows have been allowed in A districts in the past, the two lite sliders look like the old ones, and they will improve the look and functionality of the house, staff recommends approval per details submitted on the conditions that the applicant match the window in size and shape to the openings and match or contrast the color of the windows with the house.

L. Spataro asked if the opening for the window would be changed, or would the window fit the opening. A. Bleakley's contractor stated that the window would fit the current opening.

A motion that the replacement of the ten windows in the basement with 2-lite vinyl sliding windows per submitted details is approved with the following conditions: 1) The applicant shall match the new windows in size and shape to the openings. 2) The applicant shall match or contrast the color of the windows with the house if possible, was made by L. Spataro, supported by T. Russo and unanimously approved.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

OTHER BUSINESS

Annual Report – B. Lazor asked the members to look over the annual report he had put together. The commission members discussed the report. B. Seeback asked for some wording changes. The first change would be to the first sentence under “Overview”. He would like the sentence to read “The City of Muskegon has a rich architectural history.” The second change would be in the second column of page 1. He would like the sentence to read “The “no action” required application dealt with the creation of a ninth district where the Boiler Works building is located.” The commission members agreed that Bob Burns from the Muskegon Chronicle should get a copy of this. This should also be taken to a City Commission Worksession. L. Spataro stated that portions of this could also be incorporated into the newsletter. He also suggested sending a copy of this to the Hackley Public Library.

A motion to accept the annual report with the proposed changes, was made by T. Bosma, supported by D. Chambers and unanimously approved.

Guide Book – B. Lazor stated that this would be mailed to the commission members on January 17th so they may look it over before it is sent for printing.

School Board Letter – B. Seeback stated that he liked the tone of the letter. The commission members agreed that a copy of the letter should be sent to the Superintendent of Muskegon Public Schools and to Rev. Poole who is a School Board Member.

A motion to approve the letter to the school board, was made by T. Russo, supported by D. Chambers and unanimously approved.

Preemptive demolition letter – L. Spataro liked the fact there were incentives listed in the letter. There are homes that fall under willful neglect and there may be some homeowners that may not be aware there is assistance available to them. B. Seeback asked that the letters be sent to an individual and not to owner/tenant. B. Lazor stated that they would be.

A motion to approve the preemptive demolition letter, was made by L. Spataro, supported by T. Bosma and unanimously approved.

The National Alliance of Preservation Commissions – B. Seeback provided the commission members a copy of this. There is a fee. L. Spataro suggested that staff look into this for suitability and fees.

Ordinance – B. Moore stated that the HDC’s Ordinance would be taken to the Legislative Policy Committee meeting on January 22nd at 5:30 p.m. in case any of the commission members would like to attend.

Historic House Moves – B. Moore stated that two different people had had approached her about moving their historic homes into the historic district. The area that both requests are looking at is the property on Muskegon Ave. by the Synagogue. The first was Mr. Allen in regards to the Bauer house. The second was from Millie Ortiz. She recently purchased the home at 1077 Pine. The home was listed on the dangerous building list. The home has a lot of the original woodwork on the inside. B. Moore stated that she would like to try to get an incentive program started for historic homes. There would be a target area and possibly some discounted lots. This would help with the costs associated with moving a house. She had spoken with B. Grabinski (Housing Inspections) and he stated that 1077 Pine is sound and would be okay to move. The Bauer house is still being discussed. L. Spataro suggested the Jackson Hill Incentives that have become citywide incentives. The incentive program looks at porches, windows, etc. She may want to bring this before the Land Reutilization Committee also. B. Seeback had some concerns with moving houses. He didn’t want to have an historic district look mismatched. He would like to have a consistency with the homes in the area. He gave suggestions such as the age of the home or the architecture. He asked when the Bauer house had been built. Mr. Allen stated that it had been in 1885. B. Seeback stated that this house might be more appropriate in an older neighborhood. Mr. Allen stated that the Bauer house is made of brick. He felt this would go with the area by the Synagogue because the Hackley Public Library and the Administration Building are in this area and they are also made of brick. B. Seeback asked if the home would be lived in. Mr. Allen stated that he was going to live in it. B. Moore stated that before any house could be moved into an historic district, it would have to go before the HDC for approval.

School Board Meeting – L. Spataro informed the commission members of what had happened at the school board meeting regarding the planned parking lot. It had been decided to form a joint City and School Board Committee meeting to try to come up with some long-term solutions. There is a 2 hr. parking limit for on street parking around the school. This was to help with the concerns for loitering around the vehicles.

The meeting adjourned at 4:43 p.m.

hmg
01/07/03

“We admire that which is old not because it is old, but because it is beautiful.”
Winston Churchill